

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 24, 2004

The Honorable Tom Ridge
Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Ridge:

We are writing to urge your favorable consideration of the attached grant proposals submitted to the Department of Homeland Security Office of Domestic Preparedness (DHS ODP) by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA).

The MBTA is a multi-modal transit agency that provides commuter rail, heavy rail, light rail, bus and ferry services to 175 cities and towns, including the city of Boston. The MBTA carries approximately 1 million passengers per day. While we understand that some portion of the considerable one-time security costs associated with the upcoming Democratic National Convention are being met elsewhere, these MBTA proposals are related to the agency's current and daily security requirements associated with safe and secure mass transportation operations in the post-September 11th period.

It is clear that Al Qaeda is interested in targeting the passenger rail system: As you know, the Madrid terror attacks killed almost 200 people and wounded more than 1000. In addition, according to press reports, an Ohio-based Al Qaeda operative was arrested for plotting to collapse a bridge in New York City or derail a train in DC.


In developing its comprehensive security plans, the MBTA has identified the following urgent needs: \$320,000 to train police personnel; \$400,000 to expand its explosive detection unit capabilities and provide all MBTA police personnel with training in the Passenger Assessment Security Screening program currently in use at municipal airports; \$750,000 to purchase riot control, surveillance, computer mapping and intelligence software and communications equipment; and \$400,000 for the purchase, installation and training associated with chemical agent detection technology. In comparison to the magnitude of security challenges currently facing public transit agencies like the MBTA, we believe these are modest requests that DHS should make every effort to approve.


Thank you very much for your consideration of this important matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please have your staff contact Dr. Michal Freedhoff of Rep. Markey's staff at 202-225-2836.

Sincerely,


Congressman Edward J. Markey


Congressman Michael E. Capuano


Senator Edward M. Kennedy

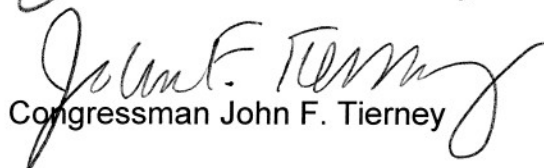

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